



Kentucky Personnel Cabinet  
Office of the Secretary  
**Employee Bulletin**

**Frequently Asked Questions About H1N1 (Swine Flu)**

In order to prepare all state employees with helpful information and tools, the Commonwealth of Kentucky, Cabinet for Health and Family Services, Department of Public Health has issued the following information to provide greater awareness and preparedness regarding the upcoming flu season.

**What is H1N1 influenza (swine flu) and who is at risk?**

- A new strain of influenza A (H1N1) began spreading worldwide among people in spring 2009.
- This flu virus is sometimes called "swine flu" because it is of swine origin.
- H1N1 (swine flu) spreads the same way the seasonal flu virus does, through droplets from the coughing or sneezing of infected people. It also spreads by touching objects a sick person touched and then touching the nose or mouth.

**When did H1N1 (swine flu) become a pandemic?**

- A flu pandemic is caused by a new flu virus that people have not been exposed to before. The flu virus spreads quickly from person to person.
- The first human cases of this outbreak in the U.S. occurred in late March and early April 2009. Kentucky's first case was reported in late April. The World Health Organization declared 2009 H1N1 (swine flu) a pandemic in June 2009.

**What are the signs and symptoms of H1N1 (swine flu)?**

- Fever higher than 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit
- Chills
- Cough
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Stuffy nose
- Muscle aches
- Diarrhea and vomiting have been reported by some people

**What can people do to prevent swine flu?**

The same steps you take to prevent the common cold and seasonal flu apply when trying

to prevent H1N1 (swine flu). The following are some general steps a family can take:

- Wash hands often with soap and water or use waterless, alcohol-based hand rubs.
- Cover the nose and mouth with a handkerchief or tissue when sneezing or coughing.
- Avoid touching the eyes, mouth, and nose, when coughing or sneezing.
- Keep children home from school, day care or other social gatherings if they are sick.
- Stay home from work or other public settings if you are sick.
- Avoid crowded places where people are confined in an indoor space.

**If people are sick with H1N1 (swine flu), what should they do?**

Since the severity of H1N1 is similar to seasonal flu, people who are sick with H1N1 (swine flu) should do the same things they would do if sick with seasonal flu:

- If you are sick, you should stay home and avoid contact with other people as much as possible to keep from spreading your illness to others.
- If you have a fever, difficulty breathing, a cough, body aches, runny nose, sore throat, nausea, vomiting or diarrhea, you should talk with a health care provider by telephone.
- Your health care provider will determine whether testing or treatment is needed.
- Before visiting a health care setting, tell the provider about your symptoms.
- Do not travel or go to work or school while sick, and limit your contact with others as much as possible to help prevent the spread of illness.

**When should I seek professional treatment?**

If you become ill and experience any of the following warning signs, seek emergency medical care:

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
- Sudden dizziness
- Confusion
- Severe or persistent vomiting

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

**KY Cabinet for Health and Family Services**

Frankfort, KY

<http://chfs.ky.gov>

<http://healthalerts.ky.gov>

**KY Regional Poison Center Louisville, KY**

EMERGENCY: 1-800-222-1222

<http://www.krpc.com/>

**The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)**

Atlanta, GA  
Toll free: 1-800-232-4636  
<http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu>

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